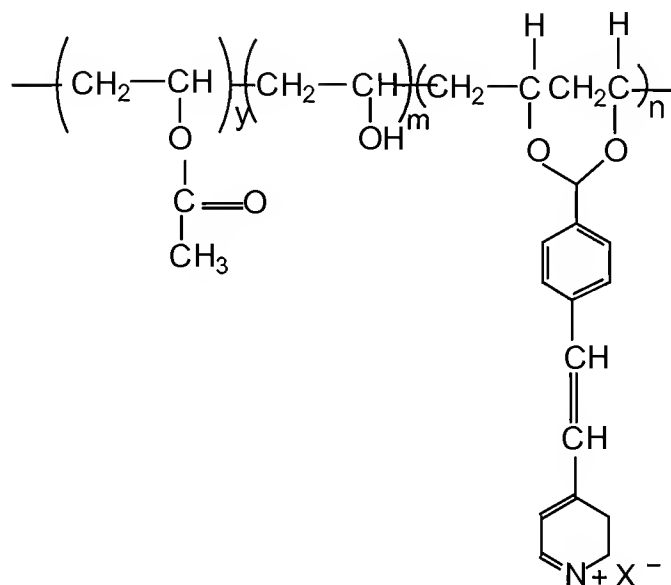


**Amendments To The Specification:**

Please amend the specification on page 2, lines 33-34 to page 3, lines 1-4 as follows:

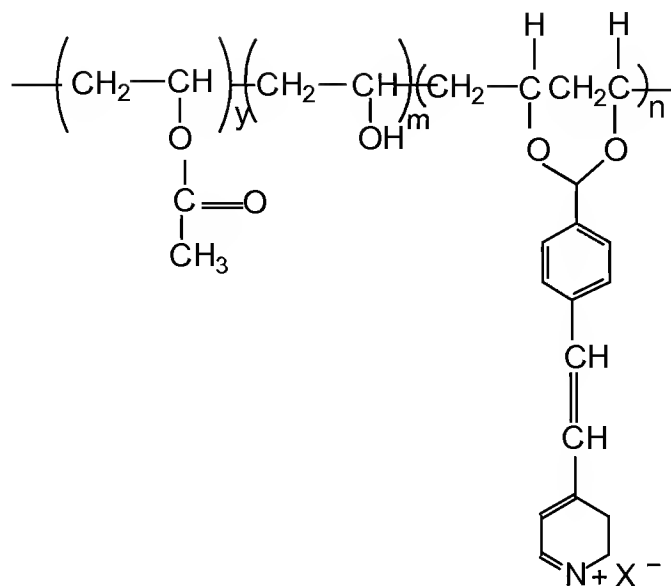
In one embodiment, the crosslinkable polymer is a polyvinyl alcohol modified with styrylpyridinium groups having the following general chemical structure:



wherein  $y$ ,  $m$  and  $n$  are positive numbers and  $\text{X}$  is an anion.

Please amend the specification on page 5, lines 1-8 as follows:

A more specific example of a useful oxygen-insensitive crosslinkable polymer is one in which the styrylpyridinium groups were added to a polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) by a condensation reaction which formed an acetal linkage. The compound has the following general structure:



wherein  $y$ ,  $m$  and  $n$  are positive numbers, and  $\text{X}$  is an anion.